# Foreign Area Officer

# Board Preparation Guide

# Preparing for a Board

## *Situational Awareness*

· Ensure that you are aware of when the various selection and promotion boards are scheduled. You should annotate all your selection and promotion boards on your calendar and begin preparation at least 60 days prior to the board. You can find the web address to the latest board schedule at the end of this pamphlet.

· Obtain a copy of the selection/promotion board announcement message and verify that you are eligible for consideration and establish all associated dates and required actions. Date of rank (DOR) drives your eligibility. Check this out carefully. You may associate yourself with a particular year group of officers while your date of rank places you in the primary zone for promotion with another year group. When you visit the webpage for the board dates, you will find the board name, tentative or projected dates, and associated MILPER message.

**BOARD:** _____

**CONVENE DATE** :

_____

**OER THRU-DATE CUTOFF**: _____

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE**:

_____

· Maintain contact with your assignment officer. A vital step in this process is to ensure you update all contact data to include: home mailing address, home phone number, work phone number, work and home email address. Prior to a selection or promotion board we will contact you and advise you of all associated actions you need to do in preparation for the board.

· However, you should not wait until someone from FAO Branch contacts you to start preparing for a board. You must take a proactive role in your board prep.

## ***Individual Preparation for the***

## *Official DA Photo*

We ask that you still mail two hard-copies of any new DA photo to FAO Branch .regardless of what your photo shop says.

❑ Is the date of your photo less than 5 yrs old (preferably less than 2 yrs old)?

❑ Does the date of your photo match the date posted on your ORB?

❑ Does the photo reflect your current rank?

❑ Does the photo present a neat appearance? (haircut? five o'clock shadow? weight? wrinkled uniform?

❑ Does the number and type of individual and unit awards on your photo match the number and type on your ORB and Official Military Personnel File (OMPF)?

❑ Are your individual and unit awards in proper order and position?

❑ Are all qualification/identification badges and tabs on your photo listed on your ORB?

❑ Does your photo include foreign awards? We recommend that you not wear foreign awards for official photos.

❑ Are you wearing the regimental crest that is reflected on your ORB?

## *Performance File*

It's important that you continuously work to keep your file up to date and accurate. "Shot-gunning" us every scrap of paper you can find one week before the board convenes in hopes that we will be able to sort it all out for you is not the way to set yourself up for promotion to the next grade. Start early. Work through your PSB/PSC as much as possible to add documents to your record. We can help you with emergencies - but don't create any on your own by waiting until the last minute to work on your file. Here's where you should start:

❑ Do all the documents in your file belong to you?

❑ Are all the documents listed in your file legible?

❑ Are your AERs and OERs in proper sequence?

❑ Is your most current AER or OER included in your file and does it match the "DATE OF LAST OER" indicated on your ORB?

❑ Is your CAS3, CGSC, or SSC AER/completion documentation included?

# Officer Record Brief

Your ORB is your professional resume. It is a one-page summary of your military career. Your goal should be to keep your ORB current and accurate so that no “pen and ink” corrections are necessary.
Use this checklist to help keep your ORB accurate. Note that this checklist does not include every aspect of your ORB but does account for the portions that contribute most to the ability of the board members to quickly summarize your military career.

**SECTION I - ASSIGNMENT INFORMATION**
❑ Are all your overseas duty assignments reflected accurately?
❑ Are your skill identifiers listed?
❑ Is your geographic orientation listed?
**SECTION II – SECURITY DATA**
❑ Is your security information accurate? FAO Branch cannot update this information. It has to be updated through your security channels.
**SECTION III – SERVICE DATA**
❑ Is this data accurate? FAO Branch cannot update this information. You will need to coordinate with the proper office at HRC to do so.
**SECTION IV – PERSONAL FAMILY DATA**
❑ This information will be "xxxxed" out for the board
**SECTION V – FOREIGN LANGUAGE**
❑ Is this data accurate? Ensure that your most current DLPT score is reflected (Be careful not to misrepresent your language abilities by keeping a long-outdated DLPT score on your ORB).
**SECTION VI – MILITARY EDUCATION**
❑ Are all your military courses listed with accurate year of completion? There is only space for ten courses. Any courses beyond ten will still be listed in the TOPMIS "electronic" version of your ORB. DLI, CSC, SSC, JPME, and INTAC (for some AOCs) are important courses to have reflected on your ORB.
**SECTION VII – CIVILIAN EDUCATION**
❑ Is the level completed accurate?
❑ Are all your civilian education degrees listed and accurate?
**SECTION VIII – AWARDS AND DECORATIONS**
❑ Are your unit awards listed and with the accurate number?

**SECTION IX – ASSIGNMENT HISTORY**
This is probably the most important section that the board will focus on. It should accurately reflect the jobs you have held.
❑ Does the "DATE OF LAST OER" match the date of your most current OER.
❑ Are the duty titles neat and spelled correctly?
The data in section IX is entered by the servicing PSC/B or Administrative Office. Please work with them to update this data.
❑ Are the DMOS accurate for each duty title?
Check them against your OERs to make sure they match. Switching ORB DMOS after the fact to make it look like you have held more FAO positions than you actually have… makes it appear as though you did just that.
**SECTION X – REMARKS** Most of this information will be blanked out on a board ORB.
❑ Is the "DATE LAST PHOTO" accurate? Does it match the date on your photo?
❑ Does the regimental affiliation entry match your photo?

# Evaluation Reports

❑ Make sure you read and understand your Promotion Board MILPER Message. It will give you important guidance regarding thru dates for OERs and submission deadlines. Your command may not be as informed as they ought to be. Don’t take a chance! Make sure you know the deal.
❑ You must track your pending OERs. FAO Branch will not know about OERs that are “in the system” until the OER is logged by HRC Evaluations Branch and annotated on your ORB.
• We can often anticipate incoming annual OERs based upon the date of your last OER. However, we will not know anything about – nor track – change of rater OERs or optional OERs (senior rater option OERs, complete the record OERs, etc).
• It is up to you to ensure that your OER does not gather dust in anyone’s in-box. Make sure it moves from your command to your PSB/PSC, and from your PSB/PSC to HRC Evaluations Branch. FAO Branch cannot place OERs in your board file. Sending late OERs directly to us will not do any good. They have to come from your PSB/PSC to HRC Evaluations Branch where they are processed and then placed into your file.
• A Late-arriving OER will be logged in at Evaluations Branch and then sent to the DA

# Letters to the Board

· With few exceptions, we highly discourage officers from submitting letters to the board. Feedback from board members strongly indicates that such letters are viewed as self-serving, or may otherwise highlight a problem in the officer’s file. Consult with your assignments officer if you are considering submitting a letter to the board.

# POCs and HELP

*View Latest MILPER Messages at:*
*https://perscomnd04.army.mil/milpermsgs.nsf*

*View Board Schedule at:*
*https://www.perscom.army.mil/select/ofwoprom.htm#cpbs*

*View ORB Online (AKO account required) at:*
*https://isdrad15.hoffman.army.mil/SSORB/*

*View OMPF Online (AKO account required) at:*
*https://ompf.hoffman.army.mil/public/news.jsp*

*View Photo (AKO account required) at:*
*https://isdrad15.hoffman.army.mil/dapmis/execute/ImageAcceptProlog*

*Check to see if your OER was received at HRC Evaluations Branch by calling (703) 325-2637/4191/2/3, DSN 221-xxxx, or e-mailing tapcmser@hoffman.army.mil*

*To get the thru date of your last completed OER in the system, call (703) 325-2637, DSN 221-2637 and punch in your SSN.*

*Check sequence numbers/promotion schedules by calling:*
*(703) 325-9340, DSN 221-9340*

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